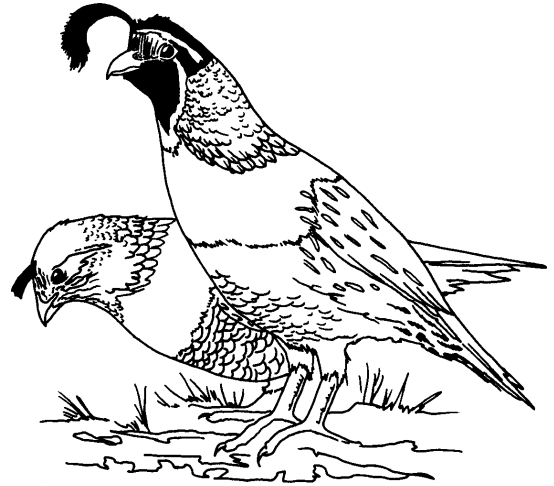


Valley Quail Thicket Assembly Instructions

An easy way to improve habitat for valley quail is to construct predator escape/loafing/roosting thickets. Ideally, quail thickets should be 10 to 20 feet in diameter and five to 30 feet tall. Spacing the thickets 200 feet apart will maximize quail habitat potential.

The thicket structure described here will provide effective predator escape cover as well as loafing and roosting cover.



Thicket construction will require the following materials:

1. One hundred and ten feet of 48 inch field fence.
2. 15 or more shrubs and trees to plant in the structure. Preferred species are Himalayan blackberry, dog rose, Rocky Mountain Juniper and lace vine (drip or flood irrigation will be required unless ground water is within one to two feet of the surface).
3. Weed barrier (landscape fabric) sufficient to cover about 120 square feet of area.
4. Four to five metal fence posts.

Construction:

1. Cut the field fence into two 55-foot sections and position as shown. Overlap the two sections by four inches and wire the pieces together every two or three feet (figure 1).
2. Re-coil the wire.
3. Dig planting holes for the shrubs and vines in five- and eight-foot diameter circles around a center planting hole (figure 2). Place excavated dirt outside the planting area.
4. Place the weed barrier fabric on the ground and cut out the fabric directly over the planting holes.

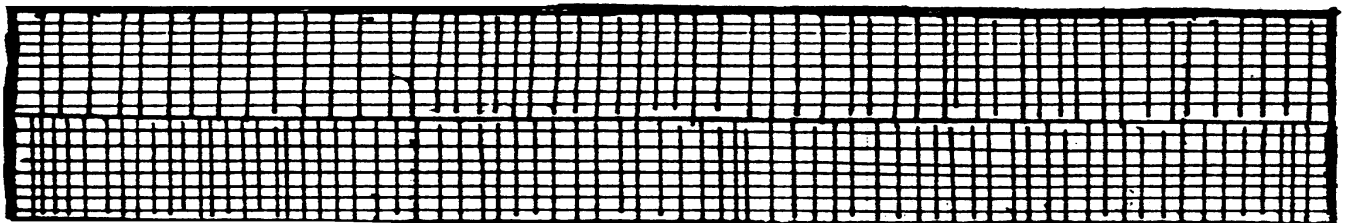


Figure 1. Two 55-foot sections of field fence wired together.

5. Plant the shrubs and vines.

6. Move the coiled wire to the center of the fabric and carefully uncoil it in a spiral configuration. Wire the terminal end of the coil against the adjacent interior coil to exclude predators. Drive fence posts along the perimeter of the thicket (figure 3).

7. The thicket will be more stable if you cut the upper wire coil from the top down about two feet at four-foot intervals and overlap outer coils on top of the interior coil (figure 4).

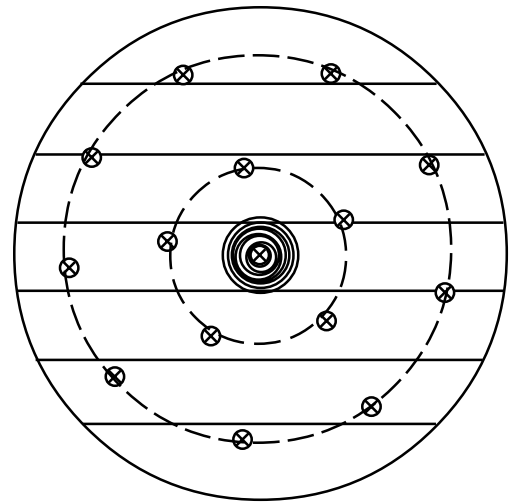


Figure 2. Aerial view of planting area with weed barrier fabric laid out in strips. Dashed lines represent the five- and eight-foot diameter "planting circles" with the shrubs (small circles) evenly distributed. The coiled wire is in the center of the planting area.

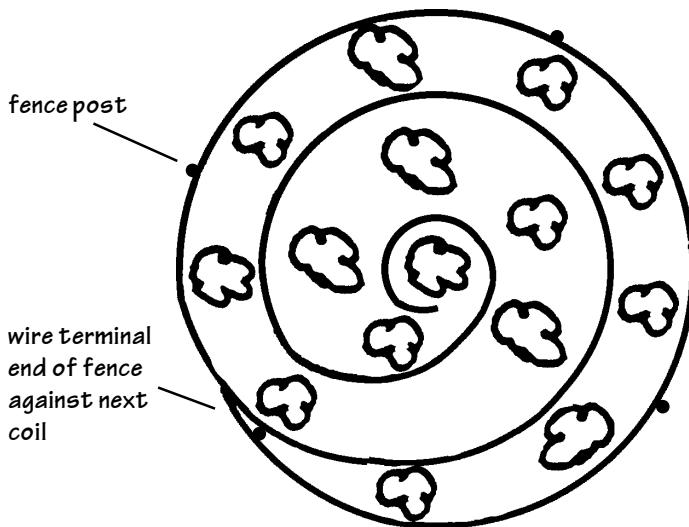


Figure 3. Aerial view of planting and fence pattern.

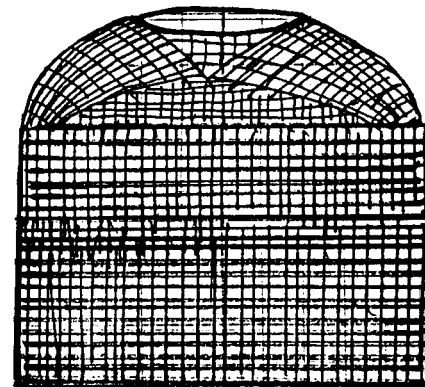


Figure 4. Side view of finished thicket.

Remember that water is the key to rapid growth of plants in the quail thicket. With good soils and adequate water, the wire trellis will be difficult to see in two to three years so the structure will look quite natural in a short time.



For more information regarding wildlife habitat construction plans, contact the Fish & Game Southwest Region office in Nampa, 465-8465.

